

University of Vienna, Department of Near Eastern Studies
Intensive two-day seminar on
Strategies for Reading Early Chinese Manuscripts
&
for Re-Reading Chinese Classics
Call for Participants

Introduction

The ERC-funded project **REPAC** (“Repetition, Parallelism and Creativity: an Inquiry into the Construction of Meaning in Ancient Mesopotamian Literature and Erudition”), based at the University of Vienna, is accepting applications for its **two-day seminar on Strategies for Reading Early Chinese Manuscripts & for Re-Reading Chinese Classics**.

REPAC investigates repetition and parallelism in Babylonian literature and scholarly writing, revealing how these structural devices should be considered major vectors for poetic creativity, rhetorical effectiveness, and inventiveness in argumentation. One of the project’s goals is to establish a fruitful conversation with other ancient cultures which feature similar literary devices for the making of an argument in different textual types. Early Chinese texts represent a rich source for comparison, and this intensive seminar, with REPAC’s main themes in mind, shall focus on approaches to and tactics for reading unearthed manuscripts from the Warring States period (475-221 BCE), namely texts about divination, music, history, and philosophy, and then applying them to re-read classics.

The seminar will be led by **Dr Adam Craig Schwartz**, Associate Director at the Jao Tsung-I Academy of Sinology and Associate Professor in the Department of Chinese Language and Literature and the Jao Tsung-I Academy of Sinology, Hong Kong Baptist University.

It will be held in person from **5th to 6th March 2024** at the Department of Near Eastern Studies of the University of Vienna.

Programme

The seminar shall be carried out over two days, or six contact hours. Day one (March 5th 2024) of the seminar will present a lecture with practicum on how to (re)-read the *Yi jing* or *Book of Changes* considering unearthed texts and inscriptions. Day two (March 6th 2024), in the morning session, shall use **four case studies to discuss textual composition, scribal manners, and authorial intention**, as revealed by hermeneutical keys (including repetition and wordplay) embedded esoterically into texts as per their written instantiations on Warring States period bamboo-slip manuscripts. The four case studies from across literary genres shall include texts associated with divination, songs, literature, and history; the afternoon session shall be an introduction to and guided reading of the *Ānhuī University Analects of Confucius*. (An English translation of the manuscript text will additionally be provided.)

Target Participants

The workshop is targeted at graduate students and early career researcher within and outside Austria with a **background in Sinology**. The organisers encourage those who are not currently enrolled in graduate programmes to submit their applications, but it should be acknowledged that priority will be given to students. Coffee breaks and lunch will be covered by the organisers. Due to limited funding, the organisers apologise that they are not able to provide financial support for travel or accommodation in Vienna.

How to Apply

Applicants are required to submit a CV and a brief statement (up to 500 words) explaining their research interests and how their work may benefit from the workshop. Applications must be sent by **January 15, 2024**, to nicla.de.zorzi@univie.ac.at and flaminia.pischedda@univie.ac.at. Successful applicants will be notified no later than **January 31, 2024**. Any inquiries regarding this announcement should be directed to the organizers at the email addresses provided above.

Dr. Adam Craig Schwartz 史亞當/亞當·施沃慈 (PhD, Chicago, 2013) is Associate Director at the Jao Tsung-I Academy of Sinology and Associate Professor in the Department of Chinese Language and Literature and the Jao Tsung-I Academy of Sinology, Hong Kong Baptist University. He specialises in Chinese language and literature, mainly working on pre-modern inscriptions and manuscripts related to divination and poetic traditions, as well as classics and their commentaries. He is the author of *The Oracle Bone Inscriptions from Huayuanzhuang East* (De Gruyter Mouton 2019) and *Songs of the Royal Zhōu and the Royal Shào: Shī 詩 from the Anhui University Manuscripts* (Brill 2022; co-authored with Dirk Meyer), the editor of *The Nivison Annals: Selected Works of David S. Nivison on Early Chinese Chronology, Astronomy, and Historiography* (De Gruyter Mouton 2018), and many research articles, in both English and Chinese, with perhaps the most notable being on divination and scribal manners. For additional details, please refer to his Academia website: <https://hkbu.academia.edu/AdamCraigSCHWARTZ>.

Schwartz is the executive editor of the book series Library of Sinology (De Gruyter), a series editor of Collected Works of Jao Tsung-I: Xuantang Anthology (Brill), and associate editor of the journals Bulletin of the Jao Tsung-I Academy of Sinology (Zhōnghuá HK) and Bamboo and Silk (Wuhan University & Brill).

The seminar is part of a series of events correlated with REPAC project, including:

- 1) the international workshop on **“Textual Repetition and Creativity in Ancient Mesopotamia, Israel, Egypt and China”** (February 27th to March 1st 2024, University of Vienna)
- 2) the lecture on **“China’s Earliest Systematic Idea of Happiness”** by A.C. Schwartz (March 7th 2024, University of Vienna).

Details about these events will be announced soon. Please visit our website for more information about the project and its activities: <https://repac.at/>